LETTER

FROM

A GENTLEMAN in the Country

TO

His Friend in EDINBURGH,

CONCERNING

Mr. *WH---F---D:*

WHEREIN

His MISSION, DOCTRINE, and CHARACTER, are impartially enquired into and examined.

Let him that thinketh he ſtandeth, take heed leſt he fall.

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THE PREFACE.

THE following Letter having been published not long ago in Scotland, *and (as it was imagined) not without its Use and Advantage in preserving, in some Degree at least, the Minds of the People from being debauched and corrupted by the novel Doctrines and novel Manner of preaching up those Doctrines introduced there by Mr.* Wh—fi—d, *it was thought not unadviseable to reprint it here in* England, *in hopes that by dispersing it, by this Means in these Parts not only the Poison that he hath heretofore diffused among us, might be dispelled, but that also all future Attempts, which he shall now upon his Return presume to make, may hereby be defeated.*

It may to some perhaps seem not a little unnecessary to have Recourse to the Products of another Nation, when some very excellent Treatises upon the same Subject have been already published by those of our own Country; and that after the Matter has been so judiciously and learnedly handled by the Bishop of

London *in one of his Paſtoral Letters, wherein he treats of the two* Extremes *of Religion, Lukewarmneſs and Enthuſiaſm; and by the Author of a Pamphlet intitled,* The Tryal of Mr. *Whitfield's* Spirit, *any farther Confutation of his extraordinary Pretenſions and of his Practice not leſs extraordinary, ſhould be thought neceſſary: In Anſwer to which I would obſerve, that though what* this Author *advances may poſſibly have,* in the general, *already appeared; yet the different Manner in which different Perſons may conſider one and the ſame Subject, the new Light which may by each particular Perſon be thrown upon different Parts of it, is a ſufficient Motive for the Republication of this: And not to take off from the Merit of thoſe Performances which I have already pointed at, or of any other which relate to the ſame Subject, I am aſſured the Reader will find that this has its* peculiar *Beauties and Excellencies.*

It is I know generally ſuppoſed, that the Followers of Mr. Wh—fi—d, *and of thoſe who act in Concert with him, are far from increaſing, and I am willing to hope that there are good Grounds for this Suppoſition; but yet ſo long as there are any Aſſociations or Meetings of his Diſciples, ſo long as he and they continue to uſe their artful Endeavours to ſeduce others, it will be neceſſary to guard againſt their Deſigns, and to take all Opportunities of expoſing the Inconſiſtency*

of

of their Doctrines with those that are taught and inculcated by the Gospel, and the strange and unwarrantable Method they take to propagate and disperse them.

If this Letter does in any Degree answer the Views proposed by the present Publication, the Author will I hope readily excuse the Liberty we have taken, as being assured that it proceeded from the same Motives that prevailed upon him to draw it up.

Something perhaps he may expect by way of Excuse likewise for such Alterations as he will meet with in this Edition; but however, as they are but few in Number, and introduced for no other Reason but to make his Sense the easier to be comprehended by his Readers in these Parts, we doubt not but he will rather approve than be offended at this Freedom.

A

LETTER

CONCERNING

Mr. *WH---F---D:*

Wherein his *Miſſion, Doctrine,* and *Character* are examined.

SIR,

AS there is nothing more agreeable to us in the Country, next to the good Accounts of our Friends, and of your Family in particular, than the *News-papers, Magazines, &c.* which are the only Amuſements we have within Doors; I muſt own we have of late been much entertained with the publick Accounts of that extraordinary Stranger, whom no doubt you have ſeen and heard too. There is ſcarce a Week has paſſed, but what we have had ſomething told us of Mr. *Wh—fi—d* in ſome Shape or other; and really his long Stay in *Scotland,* and the great Encouragement I hear he has had to continue longer amongſt us, prevailed with me to give you this Trouble, that (if poſſible) you would be ſo good as ſatisfy me in ſome Things which, in my humble Opinion, nearly concern us as Chriſtians and Members of Society.

Perhaps

Perhaps nothing but neceſſary Avocations and ſome domeſtick Buſineſs (which I hear a great many others have *thrown up*) would have kept me from ſharing of that precious Nectar diſtilled in the *Hoſpital-park* †.

At the ſame Time you muſt know, that I am lucky in the Acquaintance of a Gentleman in my Neighbourhood, who now and then turns over old Books, and is really a Man of ſome Letters. He ſtopt me from doing any Thing ſuddenly; conjured me to have a Regard to the Peace and Order of Society, and the regular eſtabliſhed Forms of the Church to which I have always repaired; and deſired eſpecially I ſhould avoid giving Offence to my own Paſtor, with whom I have cultivated the greateſt Friendſhip, and from whom I have received much Comfort, and ſolid Advice, in the many uneaſy Accidents of Life.

Much about this Time I heard of Mr. *Wh—ſi—d*'s leaving *Edinburgh*, but that he was to return ſoon; and though I found in myſelf ſomething of that Curioſity natural to Mankind, (*which by the by is nothing but a Humour of running away from one's own Buſineſs to mind the Concerns of others*) yet I was prevailed on to ſtop my coming till I ſhould have ſome Satisfaction in theſe Particulars, *viz.* By whom Mr. *Wh—ſi—d* was ſent

† *The Place where Mr.* Wh—ſi—d *preached.*

ſent into *Scotland*, and by what Authority he acted? What his particular Errand was here? What Conformity, or Diſconformity, there was in his Doctrine and Practice with reſpect to that of the Church of *England*? *&c.*

As to his Miſſion, I am told that he received the Orders of a Prieſt, at leaſt of a Deacon, from the Biſhop of *Glouceſter*; but how to reconcile this with his preſent Practice, and the Conſtitution of the Church of *England*, I was at ſome Loſs. My good Friend aſſures me, that few or none are put into Orders there, but *in ordine ad locum*, with a View to ſerve a Cure, or where the Statutes of particular Colleges in *Oxford* or *Cambridge* require Orders to be conferred on ſuch as are on the Foundation of theſe Houſes, and of ſuch a Standing in the Univerſity, who take their Turns in their College Chapels and in the Univerſity-church in the publick Offices of Religion, till they are otherwiſe provided for.

They may be indeed ſent abroad as Miſſionaries, and muſt be anſwerable to their Ordinary for their Conduct, and from Time to Time muſt give Account of their Miniſtrations and Succeſs. Such a one perhaps was Mr. *Wh—ſi—d*; and it is to be hoped he has had good Succeſs in *Georgia* and other Places he has viſited, and made Account of his Labours to the Biſhop of *London*, and received his Lordſhip's Bleſſing.

But what concerns me, and many others, in his *Miſſion* here. I would therefore ask you, or rather Mr. *Wh—ſi—d* himſelf, what Deed he has in Writing from the Biſhop of *London*, (for as a Miſſionary I take it for granted that his Lordſhip is his Superior) impowering him to preach and pray (*for as to the Adminiſtration of the Sacraments, I have not heard he has done any Thing*) in the Way and Manner he does in the Fields.

My Friend tells me, that on Church-principles we ſhould ſee his Lordſhip's Authority interpoſed, and know for what End he was ſent amongſt us. By reading the Offices for the Ordination of Prieſts and Deacons, one can eaſily ſee what Powers were conveyed to him: And indeed one of them he has exerted powerfully ſince his coming into *Scotland*, that is *Preaching*, to the *Admiration*, I wiſh it has been to the *Edification*, of many.

But what ſort of Errand was this? Have we not the Goſpel of *Jeſus Chriſt* preached to us daily? Does not the Light of Chriſtianity ſhine bright in our Faces, though many amongſt us ſhut their Eyes againſt this Light, and will not walk agreeably to the Precepts of the Evangelical Law? And how often do our own Spiritual Guides exclaim againſt the Indolence and Impiety of many who profeſs themſelves Chriſtians, who hear the Word of God

God and do it not, and with a commendable Zeal lay before us both the Promiſes and Threatnings of the Goſpel, and warmly recommend to us a Conformity with the Life and Doctrine of the Holy Jeſus? Or was there really a Neceſſity of ſending down a young Man, Batchelor of Arts, and about twenty-eight Years of Age, to teach the *Scottiſh* Clergy their Duty, and direct them to more Accuracy, Life and Zeal, in the Diſcharge of the ſeveral Parts of their Function.

Since therefore I have heard of no ſuch Deed in Mr. *Wh—ſi—d*'s Favour, I muſt take it for granted he has none; and whether he has regiſtred his Letters of Orders, or taken the Qualifications the Law requires, I cannot tell, nor does it much concern me.—— It has been hinted, both to me and my Friend in the Country, that this young Gentleman pretends to an *extraordinary* Miſſion; which indeed was what raiſed my Curioſity moſt; for ſuch it muſt needs be, ſince in all Probability he has come into *Scotland* without an *ordinary* one from his own Biſhop: I ſay an ordinary one; for the good old Gentleman aſſures me, that, on Church-principles, any Privilege Mr. *Wh—ſi—d* has, or can have, as a Prieſt or Presbyter, muſt, in the Exerciſe of it, be under the Regulation of his Eccleſiaſtical Superior; becauſe, in every Part of his inferior and derivative Office, he muſt and ought to act in Subordination to, and Depen-

dence on his Ordinary. Now this Claim of an *extraordinary* Miſſion to preach the Goſpel now-a-days, is the very higheſt of its kind; and if Mr. *Wh—ſi—d* can make it good, I promiſe that both my Friend and I, with many others, ſhall attend him. We read indeed of extraordinary Miſſions both in the *Old* and *New Teſtament*, but withal of the ſure and infallible Credentials they give us of this extraordinary Diſpenſation.

Pray, Sir, has Mr. *Wh—ſi—d* ſatisfied any of his Hearers, or ſuch as he vouchſafes to look on as his Brethren, as to this Particular? or, *does he beg to be ſilent on this Head* ?* This laſt Way is the eaſieſt, and will be found to be both the eaſieſt and ſhorteſt for him, and all others of the ſame Kidney. I deſired my good Friend's Aſſiſtance in this Particular, and begged he would help me as to my underſtanding ſomething more than I did of the Nature of an *extraordinary* Call to the Miniſtry, or any ſuch Office. He is a Perſon of great Modeſty, and I was well aware that the Subject was intricate; but this much I made out, that an extraordinary Call to preach the Goſpel, is, when Almighty God diſcovers his Will to any Man, with reſpect to the taking this Office, by *extraordinary* Ways and Manners; ſuch as by an audible Voice from Heaven, as St. *Paul* and *Moſes* were called; or by Dreams, as were ſome of the old Prophets; or

* Mr. *Wh—ſi—d*'s ordinary Anſwer to Queſtions put to him.

or in any other Shape, contrary to the ordinary Laws of Nature, by which the World and every Thing in it is governed.

Thus St. *Paul* ſpeaks of it in his Epiſtle to the *Galatians** : *Not of men, neither by man, but by Jeſus Chriſt, and God the Father.* Thus were the Prophets of old called, and in like Manner the Apoſtles, whom Jeſus Chriſt himſelf immediately appointed for that Office. And this Call (added he) continued in the Church as long as the Divine Will, with reſpect to Man's Happineſs, was not fully known, or committed to Writing; but that at length it ceaſed, and was ſucceeded by the ordinary one. Has this young Divine any ſuch Pretenſions? Does he remember the Time and Place, and the Diſpoſition and Frame he was in, when he was thus miraculouſly called of God? Has he, in conſequence of it, wrought any Miracles, or done any Thing in the Way of his Office, ſo as to give Ground to any impartial Perſons to think that he is immediately ſent by God? which were the Credentials produced by thoſe who were ſo called both under the Law and the Goſpel.

Probably this young *Apoſtle* will not directly ſpeak out the Matter; and yet I do not ſee why he may not on one Occaſion as well as another; for I am credibly informed, that, in a Converſation with a Friend who was urging his

* i. 1.

his Subjection to his College-tutor, as related in his *Life* †, he, Mr. *Wh—ſi—d*, ſaid, *But I have a new Revelation*, and immediately ſubjoined, *Lord, What is Man?* I ſhall, with his good Leave, fill up the Period for once, *A vain, proud, aſpiring, little Being, a Novice, a Babble, a Nothing.*

But don't many of his Admirers think he has a *new Revelation?* I have heard indeed, that the Gentleman has a Knack of dreaming, and particularly of Gold; which in a few Weeks anſwered in *Specie*, and was conveyed by the Hands of that Biſhop who laid his Hands on him, even with that Circumſtance of Sound which is agreeable to the Receiver, and of which Mr. *Wh—ſi—d* was advertiſed in his Sleep, when he had yet nothing in his Hands. Some ſuch Diſcoveries no doubt he has had before he ſet out for *Scotland*; for I am well informed the *Thing* has *ſpecifically* anſwered. And who grudges it? *A ſmall Trifle of Money*, extending perhaps, from publick Collections and private Donations, *to ſix* or *ſeven hundred Pounds*, can be of no great Account within the City and Suburbs of *Edinburgh*, where *Trade* at preſent is in ſuch a *flouriſhing* Way, and where publick Buildings and Charity-houſes are carried on and endowed with Eaſe and Expedition.

Some

† p. 28.

Some Moyeties from the Country may be of Uſe to defray this extraordinary Stranger's Expence, provided in his Night-viſions he has had any Repreſentation of our opulent Landward Pariſhes.

But to return, ſomething *extraordinary* there muſt needs be in Mr. *Wh—ſi—d*, ſince Crowds not only of the lower, but of the higher Rank, have attended his publick Miniſtrations, and have been encouraged (as I have heard) ſo to do by the Example of a good many of the preſent eſtabliſhed Miniſters of *Edinburgh*; who have not only themſelves been his Hearers, but have ſat at his Feet, and received his Inſtructions, from their own Pulpits. Man had very early a great Deſire and Thirſt after Knowledge; and this Deſire ſeems yet to prevail: Which, in my humble Judgment, is the only Apology can be made for thoſe worthy Gentlemen, conſidering what they were to expect from *a Novice, not in Grace, but in Years* *; when, as I hear, they are told in his *Life* †, " That the Holy Spirit from Time to Time " had led him into the Knowledge of Divine " Things, and that he had been directed by " watching, and reading the Scriptures in a " certain Manner, even in the minuteſt Cir- " cumſtances, as plainly as the *Jews* were, " when conſulting the *Urim* and *Thummim* ** " at the High Prieſt's Breaſt."

Perhaps

* *Life*, p. 42. † p. 38. ** Such an Aſſertion from one who has produced no Credentials in Proof of ſo *Extraordinary* a Communication of the Spirit, comes little ſhort of Blaſphemy.

Perhaps about this Time a Century ago, it would not have been ſo in *Scotland*; ſo very incomplying was the Spirit of the 1641, in the then Spiritual Governors of the Kirk, from that of the preſent Time.

But will not this Piece of extraordinary Conduct, (do you think) though ſupported from the Topick of more Edification and Knowledge, nay and from that of Charity too, be canvaſſed at the next General Aſſembly? I ſhould think it would; for I am inform'd, that ſome Miniſters of very eſtabliſhed Characters, have neither encouraged nor countenanced Mr. *Wh—fi—d* ſince he came into *Scotland*.

I had many other Things to enquire of you concerning this Stranger, which could not at full Length be contained within the Compaſs of one Letter; and which I'll juſt beg leave but to mention, becauſe I once ſpoke of his *Doctrine* and *Practice*.

With reſpect to Mr. *Wh—fi—d*'s Doctrine, that I mean on which he lays the greateſt Streſs, I hear it is that of the *Solifidians*, or *Antinomians*, which he preaches (as I am told) in every Corner; in Compliance perhaps with the *Seceding* * *Brethren*, who at firſt ſeemed his greateſt

* I am informed, that theſe are a few of the Presbyterian Incumbents in *Scotland*, who made (*an.* 1732, or 1733.) a formal Seceſſion or Separation from the legal Eſtabliſhment in that Part of *Great Britain*, on Pretence that the *Eſtabliſhment* was degenerated from the Purity of Presbytery, even from what they call and

greateſt Favourites, and who were the firſt Sett of Clergy (if after ſolemn Depoſition they deſerve that Name) he viſited and converſed with. Pray, Sir, let me know if he preaches that Doctrine ſtill; or if he maintains and ſupports it in his Life, Journals, or Sermons; and point at the particular Paſſages. If he does, the People muſt be poiſoned; for the Doctrine of Juſtification by Faith only, which does not work by Love, and is not productive of good Works, is a moſt pernicious Doctrine, and ſubverſive of all the *moral Part* of Chriſtianity. Is there here any Conformity, do you think, with the Doctrine of the Church of *England*, as it is taught and expounded by her own Doctors? Has Mr. *Wh—fi—d* read Biſhop *Burnet's* Expoſition of the Thirty-nine Articles? and particularly, has he duly conſider'd what the Biſhop has ſaid on the Eleventh, which treats of Juſtification by Faith only? Does he remember theſe Words *: "A Man is then only juſtified, when "he is freed from Wrath, and is at Peace with "God. And though this is freely offer'd to us "in the Goſpel through Jeſus Chriſt, yet it is "applied to none but ſuch as come within theſe

 "Qua-

(and what that is we may all know) the covenanted Work of Reformation: I would therefore obſerve here, that if their Pretence has any tolerable Foundation, if any of our Neighbours in *N. B.* are really falling off from the Rigours of their ſolemn League, (which was once the Cauſe of great Miſeries to theſe Nations) it would be well if ſome Means could be thought of to reconcile them to the truly Apoſtolical Form of Church-Government, ſo as that Epiſcopacy might be introduced among them. How this is to be brought about, muſt be left to the Judgment of our Superiors.

* *Biſhop Burnet's Expoſition*, p. 126.

" Qualifications and Conditions ſet before us " in the Goſpel. Theſe Conditions are, Re- " pentance, with which Remiſſion of Sins is " often joined, and Faith; but a Faith that works " by Love, that purifies the Heart, and that *keeps* " *the Commandments of God*: Such a Faith as " ſhews itſelf to be alive by *good Works*, by " Acts of Charity, and every Act of Obedience; " by which we demonſtrate, that we truly and " firmly believe the Divine Authority of our " Saviour and his Doctrine; ſuch a Faith as " this juſtifies, but not as it is a Work, or me- " ritorious Action, that of its own Nature puts " us into the Favour of God, and makes us " truly juſt; but as it is the Condition upon " which the Mercy of God is offer'd to us in " Chriſt Jeſus: For then we correſpond to his " Deſign of coming into the World, that he " *might redeem us from all Iniquity*, that is, " juſtify us, *and purify to himſelf a peculiar* " *people, zealous of good works*, that is, ſanc- " tify us?" All this you ſee is abundantly clear and intelligible; and I have ſeen ſeveral Diſcourſes wrote by the Doctors of the Church of *England*, wherein the Doctrine of the bleſſed Apoſtles St. *Paul* and St. *James* is proved to be the ſame. I am well convinced, that good Works are the genuine Evidences of a true and lively Faith; that they are neceſſarily required of all Chriſtians: Nor indeed do I ſee, why we may not ſay, on the other hand, that our Faith in God is render'd evident by our good Works. What therefore God has put together, no Man

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ſhould put aſunder. It is of the utmoſt Conſequence to the more common and ordinary Capacities, to have this Doctrine ſet in a true Light: They are generally fond to hear of the eaſieſt Way to Heaven; and when the Doctrines of believing in Chriſt, and of coming to him for Salvation, are recommended, without the proper Cautions of what the Goſpel enjoins to be done by them, the Conſequences muſt be very fatal. I'm ſure many learned Divines of the Church of *England* have guarded this Point ſufficiently, though I have heard that this young Teacher has ſomewhere in his Journals pronounced an Anathema againſt the greateſt Lights of his own Church, as Men quite deſtitute of the Spirit of God, and ignorant of true Religion.

This is not altogether modeſt, nor becoming of that Simplicity and Charity he is reckon'd ſo conſpicuous for by his own Admirers. But further,

Shall I believe what is told me, that though Mr. *Wh—ſi—d* has declared himſelf a Member of the Church of *England*, (ſome ſay only a Deacon) yet he has not ſo much as once, ſince he came into *Scotland*, begun or concluded his Worſhip with the Lord's-Prayer, or Doxology? This is far from the ancient Practice, and from that of the Church where he was ordained. *But he has a new Revelation.* I know not, however, whether Charity itſelf can ſcreen him in this Particular from the Imputation of tempo-

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riſing and pleaſing the Mob, (for I would not be ſo injurious to any of my judicious Countrymen as to think theſe Forms would be diſagreeable to them) who were never yet in the right.

It has been hinted to me, that Mr. *Wh—fi—d* affects to ſay, that he prays *by the Spirit*, and that he is directly and immediately aſſiſted by the Spirit of God in all his extemporary Effuſions; and for that Reaſon prefers this Way of doing this to the ſtated Forms of his own Church; which, however, I am told he has frequently uſed and recommended too.

Very likely his Miniſtrations and Manner muſt be adapted to and ſuit every Meridian, and run parallel to the Lines of Perfection, as it is greater or leſſer amongſt his reſpective Hearers. It occurred to me, while my Friend and I were diſcourſing on this Subject, that the Apoſtle St. *Paul*, in one of his Epiſtles to the *Corinthians*, has this Expreſſion *, *I will pray with the Spirit*. I own it is what I did not underſtand; though I am well aſſured, that no Chriſtian can addreſs himſelf to God in Prayer, without the Aid, Influence and Aſſiſtance of the Spirit of God; nor do we at any Time come into his Preſence in the proper Diſpoſitions of Humility, Love and Reverence, but he is ready to aſſiſt us, and to ſet forward every pious Inclination we feel ſtirring in our Souls towards him.

But

* 1 *Cor.* xiv. 15.

But as this Text has probably given Riſe to the Expreſſion ſo much uſed now-a-days, of *praying by the Spirit*, I readily enough thought, that the Meaning of the Expreſſion muſt be governed by the Meaning of the Text: And as this was above my Reach, I asked my Friend, if *to pray by the Spirit*, in the Senſe the Apoſtle mentions it in the above-cited Paſſage, was a perpetual Duty required of all Chriſtians? He ſaid it was not; and that he much doubted, whether any Chriſtian now living could with any Reaſon pretend to that Gift; for this very evident Cauſe, that it was one of the miraculous extraordinary Gifts, which God, for gaining Credit to Chriſtianity, and ſupplying the Neceſſities of the then Infant-church, was pleaſed to confer on the Apoſtles, and other Chriſtians of that Age; which Gifts, as Chriſtianity got Footing in the World, did by Degrees wear out, and at laſt perfectly ceaſed, and with them ceaſed all extraordinary Miſſions.

This then muſt be too much for any Man to pretend to now-a-days; and no *truly humble* Man will do it, even though he had dreamed, * That he was to ſee God on Mount *Sinai*. Do ye not think then, that it ſeems incumbent on Mr. *Wh—fi—d* to prove, (if he can) that *praying with the Spirit*, in the Senſe and Meaning of the Apoſtle in that Place, is not one of theſe extraordinary Gifts? or at leaſt by proper Vouchers to ſhow, that this Gift is, even at this Diſtance from

* *Life*, p. 14.

from the Apoſtolick Age, conveyed to him for the *Converſion* of the poor *Americans* and *Scots*?

It is more than probable, after this tedious Trouble I have given you and myſelf, that I have at length ſtumbled on Mr. *Wh—ſi—d*'s Errand into *Scotland*, by uſing the Word *Converſion*, which I hear is frequently in the Mouths of many of his Hearers, eſpecially of the lower kind. But certainly, in Propriety of Language, he cannot be ſaid to come and convert us, who have made a Profeſſion of the Chriſtian Religion, introduced here by Saints of a higher Size, and, by what I can learn, of more *diſintereſted* Views than this modern one, ſo many hundred Years ago.

I very well underſtand a Converſion from *Gentiliſm* to *Judaiſm*, or from *Judaiſm* to *Chriſtianity*; and in this proper Senſe I meet with the Word but once in the New-Teſtament, * *Declaring the Converſion of the Gentiles*. However, there is little in Words, when Men are in earneſt; becauſe it is of Things, and not of Names, I would be ſatisfied; nor would I have troubled you with this Remark, had I not been informed that Mr. *Wh—ſi—d* is abundantly accurate in his Way of writing, eſpecially in controverſial Points, and has ventured to attack the Biſhop of *London*, in his Anſwers to ſome Paſſages of his Lordſhip's Charge to his Dioceſe, on account of Impropriety of Language, and want of proper Diſtinctions.

Well!

* *Acts* xv. 3.

Well! I ſuppoſe that Mr. *Wh—fi—d* does not ſay he has come to convert us to Chriſtianity, but to make us better Chriſtians, and to acquaint us, with more Power, and in *greater Demonſtration of the Spirit*, with that real inward Change of Heart, Manners and Affections, which is the great Deſign of the Goſpel to make on all its Profeſſors. This is that Renovation of Mind, that New Birth, we read of in the Divine Oracles: And certainly, ſuch a Change muſt be made on all Chriſtians before they can be capable to reliſh the Joys and Pleaſures of the heavenly State.

But were we all ignorant of this Doctrine, till the happy Moment that Mr. *Wh—fi—d* viſited us? No indeed; for ſure I am our own Teachers have exhorted us, from the Words of a much greater Apoſtle than he, that we muſt *be renewed in the ſpirit of our minds, put off our former converſation, and put on the new man Chriſt Jeſus*; and from one greater than either, *Except ye be born again, of water and of the ſpirit, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.* I would fain know, what Influence Mr. *Wh—fi—d* thinks the Baptiſmal Waters, impregnated by the Influences of the Holy Ghoſt, have on the Converſion of Men, who are duly entered and initiated into the Church?

But to come cloſer to the Point: Has Mr. *Wh—fi—d* really explained the Nature of this Regeneration and New Birth, as I have mentioned

tioned it, from the Holy Scripture? Or has he laid before his Hearers the proper Evidences by which they can know that they are renewed in the Spirit of their Minds, and become New Creatures? Certainly this Spiritual Man muſt know, that Repentance and Amendment of Life is called Converſion, or a real Change, and turning the Heart and Mind to God, agreeably to theſe Words of our Savour to St. *Peter, Thou, when thou art converted, ſtrengthen thy brethren.* The Scriptures ſet forth this Change by Variety of Expreſſions, by *Regeneration*, or *being born again*; by *Reſurrection from the Dead*, and *riſing to Newneſs of Life*; by *Sanctification*, and by *being waſhed and cleanſed from all Filthineſs and Impurity*; which three laſt Metaphors are implied in Baptiſm, which is called *Regeneration* in the Epiſtle to *Titus* *: *According to his mercy he ſaved us by the waſhing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt.* I have ask'd you, if this young Divine has taught the poor unenlighten'd *Scots*, in what particular Way this great Change is effectuated, and who are the Agents principally concerned in this New Creation? Does he tell his Hearers, that Man's Co-operation is requiſite; and that he has Power to open his Eyes, and admit and receive the Sacred Influences of Heaven when vouchſafed him? Or that the Spirit of God does all himſelf; and and that inſtantaneouſly too, and by the ſole Means of Preaching three or four Times a Day? which is the only Way I hear Mr. *Wh—ſi—d* has

* iii. 5.

has taken to renew and reform our Natures, and to gain us, at leaſt *ſome Things* of ours, to himſelf, or to ſome other Ends, equally unknown to me, as he is himſelf.

I am the more apt to believe that this is the Caſe, (and if it is otherwiſe I beg Forgiveneſs) both from his own ſudden Reformation, and the Language of ſome of his Hearers.

As for Mr. *Wh—fi—d* himſelf, he was the ſooneſt converted Saint I ever read of, a few of a higher Size excepted, who were obedient to the heavenly Call vouchſafed them, not in Dreams, but in broad Day; for, by his own Account of the Matter, as I hear, his unſpeakable Preſſure both of Body and Mind, continued only for a Year: And yet many of his Hearers, I am told, have come off enlightned and converted in one Hour. No doubt many *well-meaning* People have attended this Gentleman's Miniſtrations; and I have been told, that tho' (as they themſelves owned) they heard no new Doctrine, yet they found themſelves penetrated and affected beyond whatever they had been from the ordinary Miniſtrations of their own Paſtors.

This perplexed me much, nor could I make any Account of it till I applied to the good old Gentleman, who had more Experience of the Spiritual Life than I had. He told me, that our Countrymen have been very remarkably kind to all Sorts of Strangers, from the lower to the

higher Stations of Life; and that as extemporary Preaching was the great Mean by which their Eyes were opened at the remarkable Period of the Reformation, they have continued fond of it to this very Day; that the more Injudicious and Ignorant have always been catched with Voice and Vehemence: Nay, added he, the more Judicious feel a great Power in Sound. I desired a further Explication of this. Why then, said he, to be in earnest with you, I must tell you, that Men may be furthered in any Grace and Virtue, when they are stirred up to a greater Quickness in devout Affections, and find in themselves more ardent Desires and a higher Passion for them; especially if these Affections were kindled in us, not only by pleasing Similitudes, familiar Phrases, solemn Looks, melting Tones, or the Preacher's Passion and Vehemence, but by the Weight and awakening Force of the Reasons and Things themselves which touch'd our Hearts, either when they came from him, or afterwards when we reflect and dwell upon them in our own Meditations.

If we are put into a religious Heat and good Affection only by Voice and Vehemence, and the Shew and Solemnities of Action; that indeed is something, if a wise Man have the Government of it, who will apply it to the bettering of his Life, and fix and fortify his Resolution, whilst that religious Heat is upon him. Tho', I confess, if he stops in the Affection, and does not take Advantage thereby to be thus resolved, he

he must in the End be much more *pleased* than *profited*. But when the Conviction of our Understandings goes along with this Agitation of our Fancy in the affecting of our Hearts, and we are struck by considering the Greatness of the Motives, and the Weight of the Things, then have we such pious Affections as probably will be of good Continuance.

It were well, that Mr. *Wh—fi—d*'s Hearers examined themselves on this Principle, and reflected, whether their being so much affected was owing to the Singularity of his Action, Voice, Vehemence, his own Seriousness, or to the Weight of the Doctrine, and the Forcibleness and Strength of the Motives and Arguments by which he supported it. I have been insensibly carried on thus far, from mentioning the Article of Conversion, which I am afraid many modern Saints have boasted of, before it was nigh completed. His, Mr. *Wh—fi—d*'s, was, after rude Sufferings in Body and Mind, brought about in a very extraordinary Manner. I am really in some Awe to repeat it, being, as it was represented to me from the Words in his printed *Life* *, a nigh Approach to Blasphemy. 'About 'the End of seven Weeks, and after I had been 'groaning under an unspeakable Pressure both 'of Body and Mind for about a Twelvemonth, 'God was pleased to set me free in the follow-'ing Manner. "One Day perceiving an uncom-"mon Drought, and a disagreeable Clamminess

* p. 32, 33.

" in my Mouth; and uſing Things to allay my " Thirſt, but in vain, it was ſuggeſted to me, " that when *Jeſus Chriſt* cried out, *I thirſt*, his " Sufferings were near at an End. Upon which, " I caſt me down on the Bed, crying out, *I thirſt!* " *I thirſt!*" I really ſtood amazed on reading this Paſſage, and it was ſo ſhocking, that nothing could ſatisfy me, till with my own Eyes I ſhould read it in the printed Account of his Life, which is now before me, with the other Paſſages referred to in this Letter; all which I now find to be faithfully tranſmitted to me from the Paper intitled, *A ſhort Account of God's Dealings with the Reverend Mr. G. Wh—fi—d.*

Here then we have the laſt and finiſhing Strokes of Mr. *Wh—fi—d*'s Converſion, together with the Evidences of it, which I ſhould think to all unprejudiced Minds ſpeak out the rankeſt and worſt kind of Enthuſiaſm, the Heights of ſpiritual Pride, and the ſtrongeſt Deluſion I can imagine. This Paſſage of his Life I hear has given ſome Diſquiet even to his very beſt Friends; nothing brings him off with them but his Sincerity. But alas! can a Man be ſincere to ſpeak after this Faſhion? How could he dare to run the Compariſon between the natural Cravings of a melancholy Conſtitution, drench'd in the Fumes of a miſguided Imagination and Lowneſs of Spirits, and that *Sacramental Thirſt*, as the Ancients ſpeak, that ſacred vehement Deſire and Thirſt which the Son of God had for the Salvation of Mankind? Had there been

been no other forbidding Paſſage in the Account he makes of himſelf but this one, (as many more there are) I ſhould think it more than enough to perſuade every thinking Perſon amongſt us, that he has more of Crazineſs than of Grace, and that this Son of *Levi* has taken by far too much upon him.

I have perhaps dwelt too long on this, and I am glad to hear, that ſeveral amongſt you begin to open their Eyes. And no Wonder they do; it is full Time: And no doubt, Sir, you will think it is Time I ſhould have done with him and this long Letter, which I deſigned purely for the Love and Regard I have to Society, and that I might pave the Way for ſome abler Hand to undeceive thoſe many that are yet liable to be miſled by one who was neither ſent to teach us, whoſe Errand can anſwer no other Purpoſes than what is foreign to us, and whoſe Inſtructions, as they bear in the main little or no Conformity with the Doctrine of the Goſpel, muſt have a very bad Influence on the Lives and Practices of the more ordinary and ignorant Part of Mankind. I have heard that this has appeared too plain amongſt you in ſeveral Inſtances, which I avoid to mention.

To conclude then, Allow me once more to beg your Forgiveneſs for the Length of this Letter, and, as I have been all along upon the Interrogatory, to ask you on the whole, What more Light Mr. *Wh—fi—d* has thrown upon the

the Doctrines and Duties of Chriſtianity, than what we have daily afforded us by our own Spiritual Guides? Particularly I deſire to know, What Cure he has brought for our Diviſions? Whether or not are the *Seceding Brethren* brought to a better Mind by his Means? Has he healed up their Sores, and removed the many Miſtakes with their Brethren? or has he widened them? Are there any remarkable Changes made by Mr. *Wh—fi—d*'s fervent and frequent Miniſtrations on the better Sort of Folks? Does Luxury in Eating and Drinking and Equipage abate? Are they render'd more humble, and condeſcending, and charitable? Have poor Houſekeepers in the City, or have their own poor Relations been more relieved in their Neceſſities by what this extraordinary Meſſenger has inculcated? How do the well-meaning Ladies who have been Mr. *Wh—fi—d*'s cloſe Hearers, behave? Whether have the many precious Truths deliver'd, poſſeſs'd them of more Chearfulneſs of Spirit? or have they left them ſullen and cloudy, doubtful of their State, more reſerved in their ordinary Converſation, more cenſorious, and reformed only as to Matters purely indifferent.

Finally, I want to know, What good Succeſs Mr. *Wh—fi—d* has had amongſt the Servants and the inferior Sort of People? Has he warmly recommended to them the Duties of Chriſtian Morality, greater Candour and Fidelity in the Diſcharge of their Duty in the ſeveral Stations

Stations of Life allotted them by Providence? or are their Heads now ſtuff'd with airy and unintelligible Notions of Religion, ſuch as tend to the Subverſion of Peace, Quiet and Regularity in the Families they ſerve, and the Contempt of their ordinary Paſtors and other Superiors ſet over them by God for their Good, and Edification in Piety and Virtue? If thus turns out the Caſe, (and I pray God it may not) it had been better that Mr. *Wh—ſi—d*, as he was born in an Inn, (which I ſhould not have mentioned but that he makes no ſmall Boaſt of it) ſhould have lived and died in it; for the Effect of miſleading People in the lower Stations of Life, with whom we muſt have Connections, as they are Members of our Families, and have Truſts in them too, is moſt lamentable in Society, and is what every Maſter and Miſtreſs in *Edinburgh* and elſewhere muſt ſooner or later feel to their Coſt.

I am, &c.

P. S. I hear ſomething will ſoon be publiſhed concerning the State of the Inhabitants of the Colony in *Georgia*, together with ſome late Diſcoveries about the Miſapplication of the Money collected by Mr. *Wh—ſi—d* in *Boſton* and other Places of *New-England*, which, inſtead of beng ſent to that Hoſpital, was remitted to *London*; and the two following Queries have been propoſed in ſome Companies.

1. Whether it has not been always the Cuſtom in *Great-Britain*, and particularly in the City

City of *Edinburgh*, to make Application to the Magiſtrates of the City, Juſtices of the Peace, *&c.* by Briefs, or other Methods countenanced by Authority, in Caſes of Collections for Hoſpitals, and the Support of the Poor abroad? Or if one Man concerned, perhaps no more than a Chaplain, and a ſingle Member, without any proper Commiſſion from the Society, or ſuch as has been regiſtred in their Books, can take upon him to collect Money, and in large Sums too; and get Bills paid to his Order, without any Mention made of a Copartnery, or for what particular Uſes the Money ſo remitted by Bill is to be employed?

2. Whether or not will the Money thus remitted by Mr. *Wh—ſi—d* to *London*, in the Event of his dying here, belong to, and be claimed by his Heirs?

In the mean Time 'tis once out of our Hands: *Poſt eſt occaſio calva.* Some Years ago, we were told, that Mr. *Wh—ſi—d* was a Gentleman born to 5 or 600 *l. per annum*; which put me in mind of the following Character of *Damaſippus* in *Juvenal*, Engliſhed by Mr. *Dryden.*

Shameful are theſe Examples, yet we find
(To Rome's *Diſgrace) far worſe than theſe behind:*
Poor Damaſippus, *whom we once have known*
Flutt'ring with Coach and Six about the Town,
Is forc'd to make the Stage his laſt Retreat,
And pawns his Voice, the All he has, for Meat.

FINIS.

This Belongs to
Mr Ashe